

Just use budget vote to oust Najib, veteran BN lawmaker tells opposition

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The opposition's haphazard manner in submitting a motion of no confidence against Datuk Seri Najib Razak has led a veteran Umno lawmaker to advise them to forget such a move, and to oust the prime minister through the Budget 2016 instead.

Submitting a motion of no confidence will not be successful because it would be buried under government matters, which are given priority on the Dewan Rakyat agenda, said Johor Baru MP Tan Sri Abdul Shahrir Samad.

The Barisan Nasional Backbenchers' Club (BNBBC) chairman said the opposition bloc should be aware that filing a motion of no confidence was futile, adding that they did not seem to understand Parliament rules.

"There is a way to bring a vote of no confidence against the prime minister, especially since he is also the finance minister. Use it during the presentation of the budget," he told The Malaysian Insider.

"I see this motion as pure political talk, to come out in the media, to confuse the people. This is not a NGO committee meeting, it is the nation's Parliament, there are rules, there are conventions," said Shahrir.

He said if the Budget 2016, to be tabled by Najib this Friday, failed to be passed in the Dewan Rakyat, the prime minister would automatically have to relinquish his post.

Without legislative approval, the budget could not be passed and the government would be seen as crippled without any financial resources.

"If the budget is not passed, there is no government, no finances. How will the government carry out its administration without paying salaries and allocations?"

"I did not propose this. It is a parliamentary convention. If the budget is not passed, it would mean that there is no support for the ruling party," he said.

He said even though opposition leader Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail were to bring the motion, it would be the last item on the Dewan Rakyat order paper.

"If it is true they want the opposition leader's name on the motion, it cannot replace the previous motion of no-confidence," he said, referring to an earlier motion of no confidence submitted by PKR's Petaling Jaya Selatan MP, Hee Loy Sian.

Hee's motion is currently the 25th item on the order paper near the bottom, but Dr Wan Azizah yesterday said it would be retracted so that a new one could be filed by

her, in her capacity as opposition leader.

This comes after DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said the PKR president should have submitted the motion instead of Hee.

Lim said that a no-confidence motion was of national importance and should be tabled by the opposition leader instead of an ordinary lawmaker.

"If the motion is submitted now, it will be the 29th item and even if Hee retracts it, it will be the 28th. Maybe they don't understand that," said Shahrir.

"Their actions give the impression that they don't understand.

"We are facing an opposition group that twists and turns the rules to follow their own needs. If they ever were to take over the government, I just feel we would be chaotic."

He said the opposition also realised this themselves, but because of political reasons, they were deliberately submitting the motion against the prime minister just to get the people's attention.

Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia yesterday said that Dr Wan Azizah's move to submit a motion when the sitting had already started was too late for the matter to be heard in the current parliamentary session.

Najib is currently under fire over state investment vehicle 1Malaysia Development Berhad as well as the RM2.6 billion from an unknown Middle Eastern donor that was put into his personal accounts. The funds were channeled to him ahead of the general election in May 2013.

A two-third majority is needed to push a no-confidence motion through, but the opposition lacks the numbers, with only 88 members in the 222-seat Dewan Rakyat.

The newly set up Pakatan Harapan informal coalition only has 72 MPs. Islamist party, PAS, is not part of the new pact, and it is still unclear if it would support a no-confidence motion against Najib.

PKR had previously said the opposition only needed 25 BN lawmakers to support any vote to force Najib to step down.

Najib's supporter-turned-critic, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, had also urged BN federal lawmakers to throw their support behind the no-confidence motion. – October 21, 2015.

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